

Dialect Variation in the Treatment of Hausa Words with Final Low-Low Tone

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0. Introduction

Hausa has two level tones, H(igh), which is unmarked, and L(ow), indicated $\grave{a}(a)$, plus a F(alling) tone, indicated $\hat{a}(a)$ ¹. Considering only the two final syllables of polysyllabic nouns, one finds that three of the four possible combinations of level tones occur freely and commonly, namely H-H, H-L, and L-H. Examples such as *zoomoo* 'hare', *jìminaa* 'ostrich', *fuskàa* 'face', *cookulàa* 'spoons', *wàndoo* 'trousers', and *manòomii* 'farmer' can be multiplied at will. [Note: In the examples, long vowels are indicated by double letters, short vowels by single letters. The symbol /ʀ/ represents the rolled/tap R, which in Standard Hausa contrasts with the retroflex flap, indicated /r/.]

As is well known in Hausa studies, the sequence L-L at the end of lexical items is relatively rare. Leben (1971) pointed out that when the final vowel is long, final L-L in Hausa is practically non-existent, recent loanwords such as *sakandàrèe* 'secondary school' being an exception². In addition, since common nouns of whatever tone pattern seldom end in a short final vowel³ (cf. Carnochan 1951, Gouffé 1965), it follows that final L-L nouns in general will necessarily be few in number. Words of that form do, however, exist, e.g. *gwàdò* 'blanket', *àyàbà* 'banana(s)', *beegilà* 'bugle'.

1. Given that final L-L is such a marked phonological pattern, one would expect that it might be subject to dialectal variation: this turns out to be the case. The purpose of this paper is to report on the treatment of words with final L-L in the Katsina [Kts] dialect⁴. Taking as a starting point Standard Hausa, in which the words in question appear with an invariant L-L tone, we shall describe their more complicated realizations in Katsina, where the tones manifest interesting alternations⁵. We begin with the examples in (1).

(1)

Kano	Kts		Kano	Kts	
<i>àbù</i>	<i>àbu</i>	thing	<i>àdùdù</i>	<i>àdùdu</i>	basket
<i>gwàdò</i>	<i>gwàdo</i>	blanket	<i>àgàdè</i>	<i>àgàde</i>	plantain
<i>gyàlè</i>	<i>gyàle</i>	shawl	<i>àyàbà</i>	<i>àyàba</i>	banana
<i>kùzà</i>	<i>kùza</i>	tin	<i>kwàngìrì</i>	<i>kwàngiri</i>	railway tie
<i>màcè</i>	<i>màce</i>	woman	<i>Zàmfàrà</i>	<i>Zàmfara</i>	Zamfara
<i>Mìnà</i>	<i>Mina</i>	Minna			
<i>Misàù</i>	<i>Misau</i>	Misau			

Kano	Kts		Kano	Kts	
<i>beegilà</i>	<i>beegila</i>	bugle	<i>gààrè</i>	<i>gààre</i>	type of gown
<i>biřkilà</i>	<i>biřkila</i>	bricklayer	<i>shèelà</i>	<i>shèela</i>	announcement
<i>kaařùwà</i>	<i>kaařùwa</i>	prostitute	<i>tàllà</i>	<i>tàlla</i>	hawking goods
<i>lahàdì</i>	<i>lahàdi</i>	Sunday	<i>Fùkà</i>	<i>Fùka</i>	Fika
<i>mangwàrò</i>	<i>mangwàro</i>	mango	<i>Gwàmbè</i>	<i>Gwàmbe</i>	Gombe.
<i>oodàlè</i>	<i>oodàle</i>	orderly			
<i>tazařgàdè</i>	<i>tazařgàde</i>	fragrant herb			

In Katsina, the citation form of all the above words has final L-H tone. This "citation form" is the form in which these words appear when occurring in sentence final position, i.e. before pause, e.g.

(2)

mù jee Mina Let's go to Mina.

baa nàa shàn mangwàrò I don't eat mangoes.

gòobe lahàdi Tomorrow is Sunday.

sàna 'àssà barànda His profession is speculating.

Audù nee ya ji shèela It is Audu who heard an announcement.

1.1. Interrogative sentences in Hausa are marked, inter alia, by the lengthening of sentence final vowels (Newman and Newman 1981). Some dialects also add a final floating L tone "q morpheme", especially in WH questions. In Katsina, this L tone is added to the word manifesting its final L-H, thereby resulting in a surface sequence of L-F, e.g.

(3)

taa sayoo gwàdo She bought a blanket.

zaa tà sayoo gwàdoo? Will she buy a blanket?

wàa cee cèe zaa tà sayoo gwàdôo? Who will buy a blanket?

sun ji shèela They heard an announcement.

sun ji shèelaa? Did they hear an announcement?

su wàa sukà ji shèelaa? Who heard an announcement?

1.2. In non-final position, all the words exhibiting the pattern in (1) have L-L tone (subject to additional specifications below), e.g.

(4)

kùzà taa fi dalmàa dařajàa Tin is more valuable than lead.

wannàn gyàlè mài c'àada nèe This is an expensive shawl.

bà tà sayoo gwàdò ba She didn't buy a blanket.

kà baa ni àdùdù koo tàabarmaa Give me a basket or a mat.

ita bàa kaařùwà ba cèe She is not a harlot.

shii bàa mài shèelà ba nèe He is not an announcer.

'yan Zàmřàrà sun fi koowaa wàayoo Zamfara people are the most clever.

bàa tazařgàdè ba cèe It's not a fragrant herb.

1.3. When followed by the Stabilizer (*nee/cee*), a marker used in identificational and equational sentences and for indicating focus, both L-H and L-L occur. (The tone of the Stabilizer itself is polar, i.e. opposite that of the final tone of the immediately preceding word.) If the erstwhile L-L word plus the stabilizer occur at the end of the sentence, then the L-H pattern on the noun is called for. If, on the other hand, the tonally variant word preceding the stabilizer occurs earlier in the sentence, one normally gets L-L. The sequence L-H is also possible, but in that case there is some degree of prominence added to the noun, e.g.

(5)

(a) *gàaře cèe* It's a big gown.

àdùdu nèe It's a basket.

oodàle nèe He's an orderly.

màce cèe It's a girl.

wannàn gàrín Mìna cèe This town is Minna.

mài shèela nèe nii It's an announcer that I am.

kaařùwa cèe ita She is really a harlot.

- (b) *wannàn gàarè cee dà na fi sôo* This is the big gown that I like most.
wannàn gyàlè nee mài c'àada This is an expensive shawl.
àdùdù nee ta sayoo It is a basket she bought.
màcè cee ta hàifaa It's a girl she gave birth to.
sun cée yaarinyār kaaŕuwà cee àmmaa karyaa nèe They said the girl is a harlot, but it's a lie.
shekaranjiyà Minà cee mukà wucèe It was Minna we passed by two days ago.
kùzà cee akèe saamuù à Jihàŕ Fìlàatôo = kùza cèe akèe ... Tin one gets in Plateau State.

1.4. Nouns modified by a following relative clause introduced by the particle *dà* manifest L-L tone, e.g.

- (6)
 a. *gyàlè dà ta aroo yaa bacèe* The shawl she borrowed is lost.
 b. *wata shèelà dà akà yi taa baa nì màamaakii* An announcement that was made surprised me.
 c. *wani bīrkilà dà sukà sanii yaa zoo* A bricklayer they know came.

If, on the other hand, the relative clause is introduced by a subordinating pronominal form (*wàndà/wàddà* 'the one who/which'), the noun appears with L-H tone, e.g.

- (7)
 a. *gyàlè wàndà ta aroo yaa bacèe* = (6a)
 b. *wata shèelà wàddà akà yi taa baa nì màamaakii* = (6b)
 c. *an kaawoo àdùdu wàndà ya fi wadāncān kyāu* They brought a basket that was better than those.

1.5. So far, all of the examples displaying tonal alternation have been of simple words ending in their lexical short final vowel. Words containing a suffixal linker or previous reference marker never keep the final low tone. Possessed masculine nouns (marked by *-n*) and feminine nouns (marked by *G* [= gemination]) all have a high tone on the word-final syllable, e.g.

(8)

<i>gwàdon</i>	Musa's blanket	<i>beegilakkù</i>	your bugle
<i>àdùdunkà</i>	your basket	<i>mangwàřoonaa</i>	my mango
<i>tàllattà</i>	her advertisement	<i>àyàbaataa</i>	my banana.
<i>mài shèelanmù</i>	our announcer		

Words containing the previous reference marker (-*n* masculine/-i feminine) end in a Falling tone, this being a realization of H on the final vowel of the noun plus the L tone of the marker itself, e.g.⁶

(9)

<i>gwàdôn</i>	the basket	<i>shèelâi</i>	the announcement
<i>àgàdén</i>	the plantains	<i>kaařùwâi</i>	the harlot.

Nouns modified by relative clauses introduced by the particle *dà* normally employ the previous reference marker. Those words ending in a L-H sequence should thus exhibit a Falling tone (cf. (9)). In rapid speech, however, the F+L combination found on the head noun plus the *dà* commonly simplifies to H+L, e.g.

(10)

<i>kùzad dà ta sayoo</i>	the tin ore that she bought (= <i>kùzâd dà ...</i>)
<i>biřkilan dà sukà sanìi</i>	the bricklayer whom they know (= <i>biřkilân dà ...</i>)
<i>shèelad dà akà yi</i>	the announcement that was made (= <i>shèelâd dà ...</i>)
<i>gàařen dà zaa sù baa nì</i>	the gown that they are going to give me (= <i>gàařen dà ...</i>).

2. We now turn to the set of words in (11), all of which are trisyllabic and have a heavy penultimate syllable. These can be contrasted with the items in (1), which we have been discussing so far.

(11)

Kano	Kts	
<i>agòolà</i>	<i>agòola</i>	step-child
<i>akàalà</i>	<i>akàala</i>	lead rope for camel
<i>baràndà</i>	<i>barànda</i>	speculating
<i>fankèekè</i>	<i>fankèeke</i>	pancake powder
<i>kulèelè</i>	<i>kulèele</i>	bean paste cake
<i>talàkà</i>	<i>talàkka</i>	common man.

In Kts, the citation tone has become lexicalized, with the result that these words retain the final L-H in all environments, sentence-final or not, e.g.

(12)

talàkka nèè He's a commoner.

bàa akàala ba cèè It's not a lead rope.

kàawoo akàala Bring a lead rope.

wani agòola yaa zoo jiyà A step-son came yesterday.

ɗan barànda dà na sanii A speculator whom I know.

fankèeke dà turaaree Pancake powder and perfume.

bàn ci kulèele ba I didn't eat bean paste cake.

baa nàa cîn kulèele I don't eat bean paste cake.

3. In Standard Hausa, one finds a small number of recent loanwords from English that end in L-L and have a long final vowel. In Kts, these words end in L-F tone, e.g.

(13)

Kano

Kts

lootàrèè

lootàrêe

lottery

ɗisfensàrèè

ɗisfensàrêe

dispensary, clinic

elèmentàrèè

elèmentàrêe

elementary school

fîraamàrèè

fîraamàrêe

primary school

maajistàrèè

maajistàrêe

magistrate

sakandàrèè

sakandàrêe

secondary school.

The L-F pattern is retained in all environments; it is not subject to morphotonemic alternation, e.g.

(14)

bài ci lootàrêe ba He didn't win the lottery.

ɗisfensàrêe taa koonèè The clinic burned down⁷.

sun shiga sakandàrêe They entered secondary school.

Polysyllabic words with final /n/ that end in L-L in Standard Hausa are also L-F in Kts., e.g.

(15)

Kano	Kts	
<i>ambùlàn</i>	<i>ambùlân</i>	envelope
<i>falmàràn</i>	<i>falmàrân</i>	waistcoat
<i>tambùlàn</i>	<i>tambùlân</i>	drinking glass
<i>coocilà</i>	<i>toocilà</i>	flashlight.

As in the case of the words with the long final vowel, the L-F in Kts is invariant and appears as such regardless of the position of the word in the sentence, e.g.

(16)

bàn sayoo ambùlân ba I didn't buy envelopes.
toocilà dînsà bâ ta dà kyâu His flashlight is not any good.
falmàrân cee It's a waistcoat.
kàawoo mîn tambùlân Bring me a glass!

4. The small set of words in (17) are unusual in that they vary in final vowel length as well as in tone, e.g.

(17)

Kano	Kts	
<i>faakilà</i>	<i>faakilà/faakilâa</i>	first class ⁸
<i>sikinkilà</i>	<i>sikinkilà/sikinkilâa</i>	second class
<i>taakilà</i>	<i>taakilà/taakilâa</i>	third class.

In citation form, both variants are used. Otherwise, the form with final L-F is used in final, pre-pausal position and the form with final L-L is used elsewhere, e.g.

(18)

gàa faakilâa Here is the first class.
naa fî sôn sikinkilâa I prefer second class.
bàa sikinkilà ba nèe, taakilà nee It's not first class, its third class.
jîrgîn dà ya shigoo faakilà nee The train he entered was first class.

Note that at the end of a phrase the L-F variant is preferred over the L-L form even though it is in sentence medial position⁹, e.g.

(19)

àkwai sikinkilâa, àmmaa babù taakilâa There is second class but no third class.

an hanàa ni shigoo faskilâa sabòodà baabù tikitì They prevented me from entering the first class compartment because I didn't have a ticket.

5. Up to this point, in contrasting the phonological behavior of words in Katsina vs. Standard Hausa, we have been focusing on individual lexical items with underlying final L-L tone. Differences between the dialects also show up with words of other tonal shapes that contain a possessive pronoun. As is well known, all of the possessive pronoun clitics in Hausa except for the 1st person singular have the shape CV with a short vowel and low tone, e.g. *zanèntà* 'her wrapper' (lit. 'wrapper-of-her'). If the noun being possessed ends in a low tone, the result is naturally a final L-L sequence. In Kts. these forms undergo the same alternation as the monomorphemic items in (1) already dealt with, i.e. they surface as L-L in non-final position and L-H before pause (or before a Stabilizer which is in final position), e.g.

(20)

a. *taagàmmù taa laalàacee* Our window has become messed up.

dookìntà yaa bacèe matà Her horse has become lost.

bàa mootàssù ba cèe It is not their car.

biiṛòntà nee bàa naakì ba It is her pen not yours.

b. *naa ga fuskàkka* I see your face.

zâi wankè zanènta He will wash her wrapper.

taagàmmu cèe It is our window.

Note that possessed words in Kts with underlying final L-L tone will already have been changed into L-H, as shown earlier in (8), and thus will not undergo the alternation illustrated in (20), i.e.

(21)

gwàdò + nkà → *gwàdonkà* your blanket NOT **gwàdònka*

àdùdù + ntà → *àdùduntà* her basket NOT **àdùdùnta*

beegilà + nmù → *beegilammù* our bugle NOT **beegilàmmu*.

6. Finally, it should be pointed out that the avoidance of final L-L in Kts does not apply to ideophones or ideophonic adjectives, words that phonologically stand outside the normal system anyway. These words, shown in bold in (22), appear with the same L tones that one finds in Standard Hausa, e.g.

(22)

naa ci àbinci sàlâlà I ate tasteless food.

yanàa dà gaashii buzuu-bùzùu He is extremely hairy.

gàa itaatuwàa gungumaa-gùngùmàa dà suu Here are some extremely thick, tall trees.

yaa yi jòomòomòo dà bàakii He pouted.

7. Conclusion

In this paper we have looked at words ending in final L-L in Standard Hausa and have described the variant realizations of these words in the Katsina dialect. We have discovered two basic patterns. With words of some canonical shapes, the tone in Katsina alternates essentially between L-L in non-pre-pausal position and L-H elsewhere (where elsewhere includes the citation form). This alternating pattern also applies to words in which the L-L is due to the addition of a low tone possessive pronoun to a word with lexical final low tone. One small set of words displays a variation between L-L with a short final vowel and L-F with a long final vowel. Words of some canonical shapes have lost the L-L form entirely and manifest an invariant L-H or L-F pattern. Finally, it is pointed out that the special treatment of L-L words in Katsina does not extend to ideophones.

Studies of Hausa dialects (e.g. Abubakar 1982, Ahmed and Daura 1970, Bello 1992) have tended to neglect systematic differences in tone, although we know that such differences do in fact exist (see Newman, in press). By providing a careful account of the behavior of tone in the Katsina dialect as compared with Standard Hausa, we hope to have made a substantive contribution to Hausa dialectology as well as to Hausa tonology.

Notes

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¹ For most analytical purposes, the Falling tone can be viewed as a combination of H+L on a single syllable. Indications that the F is in some sense a unitary contour tone are discussed in Newman (1992, in press).

² On the basis of the phonotactic gap and the existence of certain morpheme alternants, Leben proposed that Hausa had an active process rule, now referred to as low-tone-raising (LTR), whereby word-final L-L went to L-H if the final vowel was long. The synchronic validity of this rule has been challenged by Newman and Jagger (1989a); see also the observations by Schuh (1989) and the comments in reply by Newman and Jagger (1989b).

³ With proper names, on the other hand, short final vowels are the norm.

⁴ The description provided here reflects the speech and linguistic knowledge of Dr. Ismail Junaidu, a native of Katsina. To determine how far his tonal usage is found geographically and the extent to which other speakers exhibit deviations from his particular pattern would require a full-scale dialect study that is yet to be carried out.

⁵ Interestingly, in a now probably forgotten footnote, Hodge (1947: 35n) noted that his Katsina informant had an L-L/L-H alternation with the two words *àbù* 'thing' and *màcè* 'woman' (mistakenly transcribed *màcèè* with a long final vowel).

⁶ The *-i* appears as such in final position. In non-final position, it completely assimilates to and becomes a geminate with the immediately following consonant, e.g. *àyàbât taa yi c'àada* 'The bananas are too expensive'; *bàn ga kaañwâb ba* 'I didn't see the prostitute'.

⁷ In SH, this word is masculine, e.g. *disfensârêe yaa koonèe*.

⁸ The dictionaries generally give this word as *faskilâ*; the pronunciation without the /s/ is now becoming standard.

⁹ The specification of "final" as meaning phrase-final rather than utterance-final probably also applies to the forms described earlier manifesting tonal alternation, e.g. *àkwai àyàba, àmmaa baabù goobàa* 'There are bananas, but no guavas', cf. *bà à kaawoo àyàbà ba, sai dai goobàa* 'They didn't bring bananas, only guavas'.

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